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SUBJECT: GERMANY/TIP - POLICE INVESTIGATIONS HIGHLIGHT
EFFORTS AGAINST CHILD SEX TOURISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

11. Summary: A number of TIP-related police investigations concluded in recent weeks highlight German efforts to prosecute German nationals allegedly engaged in child sex tourism and other forms of trafficking in South East Asian countries. Over the past two years, German law enforcement agencies have stepped up cooperation with police and government authorities in Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. End Summary.

12. Since the beginning of 2006, the German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) has stepped up cooperation with Thai law enforcement officials to investigate German sex tourists and pedophiles operating in Thailand. The goal is to facilitate prosecution of perpetrators in Thailand, as well as in Germany. According to BKA reports, Thai authorities, working with BKA officials, conducted a raid in the red light district of Pattaya in Thailand in December 12006. They arrested six persons, including one German national, on charges of sexual abuse of minors. The BKA conducted subsequent investigations in Germany to build a case to permit prosecutors from the German city of Giessen to pursue charges against sex tourists in Germany as well.

13. In cooperation with the BKA and prosecutors in the German city of Giessen, a second German national was arrested March 8 in Pattaya, Thailand on charges of sexually abusing a minor. German law enforcement officials view the recent arrests as the first major successes of their efforts to improve cooperation with Thai officials. In a press statement, BKA President Joerg Ziercke said the joint investigations send a clear signal to German child sex tourists that Germany will go after them in Thailand and Germany.

14. German cooperation facilitated the successful prosecution of two Germans convicted in a Cambodian court on charges of sexual abuse of minors. The two Germans were sentenced, respectively, to 28 years in prison and 12 years in prison on March 9. The BKA reportedly assisted in the investigation by retrieving erased evidence on the defendants' computers, which showed photos of the Germans abusing the children. In another case featured in German media, a German citizen arrested in Cambodia in February on charges of sexual abuse of children has since been extradited to Kiel, Germany to stand trial.

15. On March 8, Berlin police, in cooperation with the Berlin prosecutor's office, arrested a Vietnamese couple in Berlin suspected of alien smuggling and trafficking for purposes of labor exploitation. The couple is accused of holding Vietnamese women in peonage. One of the women had been held for six months and forced to work as a domestic servant in order to pay off a "smuggling fee" of 9,000 euros.

